UNITED NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/549
11 November 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifty-second session
Agenda item 98 (b)

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1 - 3	3
II.	IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 51/180	4 - 9	3
	A. Action by States	4 - 6	3
	B. Action by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee	7	4
	C. Activities of the interim secretariat	8 - 9	4
III.	MAIN SUBSTANTIVE DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION AT ITS FIRST SESSION	10 - 24	4
IV.	INSTITUTIONAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES	25 - 39	7
	A. Institutional linkage	26 - 27	7
	B. Administrative support	28	8
	C. Conference services	29 - 31	8

97-29746 (E) 121197 131197

/...

CONTENTS (continued)

		Paragraphs	Page
D.	Financial rules: transfer of balances of extrabudgetary funds	32 - 34	8
E.	Transitional financial arrangements	35 - 37	9
F.	Appointment of the head of the Convention secretariat	38 - 39	10
V.	CONCLUSIONS	40 - 41	10
A.	Actions requested of the General Assembly	40	10
B.	Actions requested of the Secretary-General	41	11

Annex

DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE FIRST SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON DESERTIFICATION THAT REQUIRE ACTION BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY 12

Decision 2/COP.1, entitled "Financial rules of the Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies and the Convention Secretariat" 12

Decision 3/COP.1, entitled "Designation of a Convention Secretariat and arrangements for its functioning: administrative and support arrangements" 17

Decision 4/COP.1, entitled "Interim arrangements for the Conference of the Parties and for the Secretariat of the Convention 19

Decision 8/COP.1, entitled "Extrabudgetary funding for 1998" 20

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 51/180 of 16 December 1996, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-second session on the implementation of the resolution and on any possible implications arising from the report of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa on its first session.[1] The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

2. Section II of the present report indicates actions taken in response to the resolution by States, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee and the head of the interim secretariat of the Convention. Section III summarizes the substantive results of the first session of the Conference of the Parties. Section IV outlines the institutional, administrative and financial implications for the United Nations of the decisions of the Conference of the Parties.

3. These implications relate to (a) the institutional linkage of the Convention's permanent secretariat to the United Nations Secretariat, (b) administrative support from the United Nations Secretariat to the Convention's permanent secretariat, (c) financing from the regular budget of the United Nations of the conference services needed by the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, (d) transfer to the Convention of balances of extrabudgetary funds established under General Assembly resolution 47/188 of 22 December 1992, and (e) transitional arrangements for ensuring an adequate initial cash-flow to the Convention budget.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 51/180

A. Action by States

1. Status of ratifications

4. In paragraph 1 of resolution 51/180, the Assembly welcomed the fact that the Convention would enter into force on 26 December 1996, and called upon more countries to take appropriate action for the ratification, acceptance or approval of or accession to the Convention.

5. As of 15 October 1997, instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession had been deposited by the following 113 States: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania,

Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Togo, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe. A list of all parties and signatories to the Convention, indicating the respective dates of signature and of receipt of the instruments of ratification, where applicable, is available from the Secretariat on request.

6. At the first session of the Conference of the Parties, many other States and a regional economic integration organization indicated that they had initiated internal processes for ratification, acceptance, approval or accession and expected that they would be completed in the coming months.

B. Action by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee

7. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 51/180, the Assembly urged the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to complete fully, at its tenth session, the consideration of all outstanding negotiating issues, including the negotiations of the two working groups and the preparatory work for the first session of the Conference of the Parties. The report of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee at its tenth session and resumed tenth session is before the Assembly in documents A/52/82 and A/52/82/Add.1.

C. Activities of the interim secretariat

8. In the period covered by this report, the interim secretariat continued to focus on providing substantive and organizational services to the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies. The secretariat also has been requested by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to carry out additional tasks. Of particular significance among these are the facilitation of technical and financial support for affected developing countries as required by the resolution on urgent action for Africa as well as interim action in other regions.

9. For additional information on activities undertaken under the above mandate, see document ICCD/COP(I)/7.

III. MAIN SUBSTANTIVE DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION AT ITS FIRST SESSION

10. The first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification was held at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome, from 29 September to 10 October 1997.

11. The session was attended by 102 of the 104 parties at the time, and by 16 observer States and an observer for a regional economic integration organization. The participation of developing countries was facilitated by the contributions of Governments to the Special Voluntary Fund set up for that purpose by Assembly resolution 47/188. However, since the participation of some countries remains dependent on the availability of financial resources, there is a concern that, should replenishment of the Voluntary Fund be insufficient, many countries affected by desertification might not be adequately represented in future sessions of the Conference of the Parties.

12. Participation in the Conference of the Parties by institutions of the United Nations system and international and non-governmental organizations was active and constructive. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the Organization of African Unity, the Comité Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Southern African Development Community, l'Union du Maghreb Arabe, the Inter-American Development Bank, the African Development Bank, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the League of Arab States, l'Observatoire du Sahara et du Sahel, in particular, were active participants. In some cases, during the process of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee's work and beyond, they have made financial or human resources available to the Secretariat and/or are providing expertise and resources in support of preparatory activities carried out in a number of affected developing countries.

13. The Conference of the Parties accredited 23 intergovernmental organizations and 455 non-governmental organizations, many of which had been accredited to previous sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. Overall, the contribution from the non-governmental community was relevant and useful to the work of the Conference of the Parties; however, it must be noted that the degree of participation from the non-governmental community is also highly dependent on the availability of financial assistance.

14. The Conference of the Parties adopted by consensus 29 decisions and 2 resolutions aimed at setting in motion the processes needed to promote the effective global implementation of the Convention and its contribution to sustainable development.

15. The Conference of the Parties agreed on the functions and modalities of the Global Mechanism for the mobilizing of financial resources for the implementation of the Convention. The Conference of the Parties decided to house the mechanism at IFAD in Rome with the collaboration of UNDP, the World Bank and other relevant international organizations, which will play major roles in the implementation of the Convention.

16. A high-level segment held during the second week, in which 46 officials of ministerial rank, two Vice-Presidents and a Deputy Prime Minister participated, gave political support to the implementation of the Convention.

17. The Committee on Science and Technology, a subsidiary body of the Conference, met in conjunction with the Conference of the Parties and developed a programme of work in the areas of networking, benchmarks and indicators, collaboration with other scientific bodies and the application of traditional knowledge.

18. The Conference of the Parties also appointed an ad hoc group of independent experts to take work forward on benchmarks and indicators and nominated its coordinator.

19. The Conference of the Parties designated Bonn as the seat of the permanent secretariat, accepted the offer of the Secretary-General to provide administrative and support arrangements for the Convention's permanent secretariat, and adopted a Convention budget, as well as rules of procedures and financial rules.

20. The COP also reached decisions in regard to (a) interim arrangements for the Conference of the Parties and the Convention secretariat, (b) the Supplementary Fund and Special Fund established in the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties, and also on extrabudgetary funding for the secretariat for 1998, (c) continuation of consideration of the question of the review of implementation of the Convention, (d) approval of procedures for the communication of information and review of implementation, (e) regional implementation annexes, (f) collaboration with other Conventions, (g) relations with the Global Environment Facility, and (h) standing items on its agenda, and selected items on the agenda for its second session.

21. The Conference of the Parties also held a "Dialogue on Building Partnerships", which allowed participants to have a fruitful exchange of views on the subject in keeping with the participative spirit of the Convention. This led to the adoption by the Conference of decision 27/COP.1 on the inclusion of activities of non-governmental organizations within the official programme of work of future sessions of the Conference.

22. Concurrent with the formal programme of the Conference of the Parties, a number of parallel events were held, including a Forum of Non-Governmental Organizations, a Media Outreach Workshop and Seminar, a Forum of Mayors on Cities and Desertification and a comics exhibit on the impact of desertification.

23. The Conference of the Parties decided that its second session would be held in Dakar, Senegal, in the second half of 1998.

24. Regarding the programme of work of the second session of the Conference of the Parties, in addition to tasks assigned to it by the Convention, the Conference agreed to include a number of selected items, such as the promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions, procedures for the resolution of questions that may arise with regard to implementation, and an annex containing arbitration procedures.

IV. INSTITUTIONAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

25. A number of institutional, administrative and financial implications flow from the decisions of the Conference of the Parties regarding the financing of the Convention process from the United Nations programme budget and the functioning of the Convention's permanent secretariat under the authority of the Secretary-General as chief administrative officer of the Organization (see annex below). The relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties are those on (a) the institutional linkage of the Convention's permanent secretariat to the United Nations, (b) the financial procedures for the Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies and its permanent secretariat, (c) the Convention budget, and (d) other voluntary funding for the biennium 1998-1999. The decision to relocate the Convention secretariat to Bonn, in response to an offer by the Government of Germany, should also be borne in mind. Aspects of these decisions that have a direct bearing on the relationship between the Convention's permanent secretariat and the United Nations are presented below.

A. Institutional linkage

26. The Conference of the Parties addressed the question of the institutional linkage of the Convention secretariat to the United Nations on the basis of the offer made by the Secretary-General (see A/AC.241/44 and A/AC.241/55) and the related conclusions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee at its ninth and tenth sessions. In his offer, the Secretary-General suggested that the general principles of the linkage of the Convention secretariat to the United Nations could be recorded in reciprocal decisions of the Conference of the Parties and the General Assembly. Accordingly, in its decision 3/COP.1, the Conference of the Parties decided that the Convention secretariat should be institutionally linked to the United Nations, while not being fully integrated in the work programme and management structure of any particular department or programme. The Conference further decided to review the functioning of the institutional linkage of the Convention secretariat to the United Nations, not later than at its fourth session, in consultation with the Secretary-General, with a view to making such modifications as may be considered desirable by both parties. The Assembly is invited to adopt an appropriate decision endorsing this institutional linkage and providing for its review.

27. In the context of the institutional arrangements for the Convention secretariat, the Conference expressed appreciation for the generous support provided to the interim secretariat by various departments and programmes of the United Nations, as well as agencies of the United Nations system. It also expressed the desire that the support and cooperation given by those departments, programmes and agencies should continue. The Conference also invited these entities and the Executive Secretary to collaborate in reaching understandings that specify the nature of cooperation and support that each entity would provide to the Convention secretariat.

B. Administrative support

28. In its decision 3/COP.1 on administrative and support arrangements, the Conference accepted the arrangements proposed by the Secretary-General for administrative support to the Convention secretariat, as contained in documents A/AC.241/44 and A/AC.241/55. It further requested the Executive Secretary to pursue the question of the allotment of overhead to defray administrative expenses, as indicated in the offer of the Secretary-General, and to report to its second session on the results achieved.

C. Conference services

29. In its decision 4/COP.1, the Conference of the Parties requested the Assembly, bearing in mind the institutional linkage of the Convention secretariat to the United Nations and the large number of States, including those which are on the list of least developed countries that are Parties to the Convention, to decide to finance from the regular programme budget of the United Nations the conference-servicing costs arising from sessions of the Conference of the Parties and subsidiary bodies for the duration of the institutional linkage approved by the Conference of the Parties and described in paragraph 28 above. In this connection, in paragraph 3(b) of decision 6/COP.1, the Conference noted that conference-servicing costs, provision for which was requested from the Assembly, are estimated at $1,000,000 for 1999 and that, should the Assembly not accede to this request, the related costs would be charged to the Parties.

30. Furthermore, in its decision 4/COP.1, the Conference requested the Assembly to include its second session and the meetings of its subsidiary bodies in the calendar of conferences and meetings for 1998-1999.

31. The Secretary-General hereby conveys to the Assembly this request from the Conference of the Parties and invites the Assembly to take action thereon at its current session. It should be noted that the proposed programme budget for 1998-1999 does not provide for conference services for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies.

D. Financial rules: transfer of balances of extrabudgetary funds

32. The Conference of the Parties also adopted, in its decision 2/COP.1, the financial rules of the Conference, its subsidiary bodies and the Convention secretariat. An indicative scale as a basis for contributions by the Parties to the Convention budget in 1999 is expected to be adopted at the second session of the Conference of the Parties.

33. In accordance with the financial rules, the budget of the Convention is to be prepared by the head of the Convention secretariat and adopted by the Conference of the Parties. The resources of the Conference of the Parties shall be as follows: (a) the contributions made each year by Parties on the basis of an indicative scale; (b) other voluntary contributions made by Parties; (c) contributions from States non-Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and

non-governmental organizations and other sources; (d) the uncommitted balance of appropriations from previous financial periods; and (e) miscellaneous income. Initially, three funds shall be established by the Secretary-General and managed by the head of the Convention secretariat: a general fund to cover all expenditures under the core administrative budget of the Convention, to which Parties will contribute according to an approved indicative scale; a supplementary fund to support participation of non-governmental organizations from affected developing country Parties, particularly the least developed among them, in sessions of the Conference and to facilitate assistance to affected developing countries in accordance with articles 23 and 26 of the Convention as well as other appropriate purposes consistent with the objectives of the Convention; and a Special Fund to support participation of representatives of developing countries in the sessions of the Conferences of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies.

34. With regard to these funds, the Conference of the Parties in its decision 8/COP.1 requests the Assembly to transfer any amounts remaining in the Trust Fund and the Special Voluntary Fund, which were established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/188, respectively to the supplementary fund to be established pursuant to paragraph 9 of the financial rules and to the special fund to be established in accordance with paragraph 10 of the financial rules.

E. Transitional financial arrangements

35. The initial phase of the new Convention Secretariat arrangements for the Convention and the relocation of the secretariat to Bonn are bound to give rise to problems of transition. The competent services of the United Nations Secretariat will be available to help the Convention secretariat to overcome these problems. However, the question of the financial transition merits special consideration.

36. The Convention budget approved by the Conference of the Parties for 1999, as the second year of the biennium 1998-1999, will take effect on 1 January 1999. In this connection, the Secretary-General has taken note of paragraph 14 of the financial rules for the Conference of the Parties, which provides that each Party shall, as far in advance as possible of the date due for the contribution, inform the head of the Convention Secretariat of the contribution it intends to make and of the projected timing of that contribution. Paragraph 14 also provides that contributions for each calendar year are expected on or before 1 January of that year.

37. Given that provisions for the interim secretariat within the United Nations programme budget expire on 31 December 1998, and considering that some Parties may need additional time to fulfil the necessary formalities that will permit them to make their first contributions to the Convention budget, the Convention budget will be faced with some initial cash-flow problems unless parties make contributions in advance of 1 January 1999.

F. Appointment of the head of the Convention secretariat

38. Decision 4/COP.1 also contains a request from the Conference of the Parties to the Secretary-General to appoint, after consultation with the Conference of the Parties through its Bureau, the first head of the Convention secretariat, with the title of Executive Secretary at the level of Assistant Secretary-General on an exceptional basis for a three-year period starting on 1 January 1999. Consultations on this matter have been initiated between the President of the Conference of the Parties and the Secretary-General.

39. The head of the Convention secretariat shall be accountable to the Conference of the Parties for the implementation of the policies and programme of work approved by the Conference and to the Secretary-General as the chief administrative officer of the Organization, including for the observance of the financial and staff regulations and rules of the United Nations. In carrying out the latter responsibilities the head of the Convention secretariat will report to the Secretary-General on administrative and financial issues, through the Under-Secretary-General for Management, and through the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs on other issues.

V. CONCLUSIONS

A. Actions requested of the General Assembly

40. In summary, the Conference of the Parties has requested the General Assembly:

(a) To endorse the institutional linkage between the Convention's permanent secretariat and the United Nations and provide for its review (decision 3/COP.1);

(b) To request the Secretary-General to authorize the head of the interim secretariat to use in 1998 the Special Voluntary Fund and the Trust Fund in accordance with paragraph 7 of decision 8/COP.1;

(c) To request the inclusion of the second session of the Conference of the Parties and meetings of its subsidiary bodies in the calendar of conferences and meetings for 1998-1999 (para. 3 of decision 4/COP.1);

(d) To approve the conference-servicing costs for the duration of the institutional linkage of the Convention's permanent secretariat to the United Nations (para. 2 of decision 4/COP.1);

(e) To request the transfer of any amounts remaining in the Trust Fund and the Special Voluntary Fund as of 31 December 1998, respectively, to the supplementary fund to be established pursuant to paragraph 9 of the financial rules of the Conference and to the special fund to be established in accordance with paragraph 10 of the financial rules of the Conference (para. 8 of decision 8/COP.1).

B. Actions requested of the Secretary-General

41. The Conference of the Parties has also requested the following of the Secretary-General:

(a) Appointment by the Secretary-General, after consultation with the Conference of the Parties through its Bureau, of the head of the Convention secretariat at the level of Assistant Secretary-General for a three-year period (starting 1 January 1999) (para. 4 of decision 4/COP.1);

(b) Authorization by the Secretary-General for the use of the Special Voluntary Fund to assist developing countries to participate in the second session of the Conference of the Parties (para. 5 of decision 8/COP.1);

(c) Authorization by the Secretary-General for the use of the Trust Fund to support the participation of non-governmental organizations in the work of the second session of the Conference of the Parties (para. 6 of decision 8/COP.1).

Notes

[1] The report of the first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Desertification, which was held in Rome from 29 September to 10 October 1997, will be issued under the symbol ICCD/COP(1)/11. Those decisions that require action by the Secretary-General or the General Assembly are contained in annex I to this report. The complete resolutions and decision adopted at the Conference will be made available to the Assembly at its current session for information.

Annex

DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE FIRST SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON DESERTIFICATION THAT REQUIRE ACTION BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Decision 2/COP.1

Financial rules of the Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies and the Convention Secretariat

The Conference of the Parties,

Considering the provisions of the Convention, particularly article 22, paragraph 2 (e), which stipulates that the Conference of the Parties shall adopt, at its first session, financial rules for itself and any subsidiary bodies,

Having examined the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies and the Convention Secretariat,

Decides to adopt the financial rules annexed to the present decision.

Annex

FINANCIAL RULES FOR THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA, ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES AND THE CONVENTION SECRETARIAT

Scope

1. The present rules shall govern the financial administration of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, its subsidiary bodies and the Convention Secretariat. In so far as not specifically provided by the present rules, the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations shall apply.

Financial period

2. The financial period shall be a biennium, of which the first calendar year shall be an even-numbered year.

Budget

3. The head of the Convention Secretariat shall prepare the budget estimates for the following biennium in United States dollars showing projected income and expenditures for each year of the biennium concerned. The head of the Convention Secretariat shall dispatch the estimates to all Parties to the Convention at least ninety days before the opening of the session of the Conference of the Parties at which the budget is to be adopted.

4. The Conference of the Parties shall, prior to the commencement of the financial period that the budget covers, consider the budget estimates and adopt by consensus a core budget authorizing expenditures other than those referred to in paragraphs 9 and 10.

5. Adoption of the core budget by the Conference of the Parties shall constitute authority to the head of the Convention Secretariat to incur obligations and make payments for the purposes for which the appropriations were approved and up to the amounts so approved, provided always that, unless specifically authorized by the Conference of the Parties, commitments shall be covered by related income.

6. The head of the Convention Secretariat may make transfers within each of the main appropriation lines of the approved core budget. The head of the Convention Secretariat may also make transfers between such appropriation lines up to limits which the Conference of the Parties may set as appropriate.

Funds

7. A General Fund for the Convention shall be established by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and managed by the head of the Convention Secretariat. Contributions made pursuant to paragraph 12 (a), along with any additional contributions to offset core budget expenditures that are made, pursuant to paragraphs 12 (b) and 12 (c), by the Government hosting the Convention Secretariat and by the United Nations shall be credited to the General Fund. All core budget expenditures made pursuant to paragraph 5 shall be charged to the General Fund.

8. Within the General Fund there shall be maintained a working capital reserve at a level to be determined from time to time by the Conference of the Parties by consensus. The purpose of the working capital reserve shall be to ensure continuity of operations in the event of a temporary shortfall of cash. Drawdowns from the working capital reserve shall be restored from contributions as soon as possible.

9. A Supplementary Fund shall be established by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and managed by the head of the Convention Secretariat. The Supplementary Fund shall receive contributions pursuant to paragraphs 12 (b) and (c), other than those specified in paragraphs 7 and 10, including contributions earmarked, in accordance with paragraph 15, for:

(a) Support to the participation of some representatives of non-governmental organizations from affected developing country Parties, particularly the least developed among them, in sessions of the Conference of the Parties;

(b) Facilitation of assistance to affected developing countries in accordance with article 23, paragraph 2 (c), and article 26, paragraph 7, of the Convention;

(c) Other appropriate purposes consistent with the objectives of the Convention.

10. A Special Fund shall be established by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and managed by the head of the Convention Secretariat. The Special Fund shall receive contributions pursuant to paragraphs 12 (b) and (c) earmarked to support the participation of representatives of developing, and in particular least developed, country Parties affected by desertification and/or drought, particularly those in Africa, in the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies.

11. In the event that the Conference of the Parties decides to terminate a fund established pursuant to the present rules, it shall so advise the Secretary-General of the United Nations at least six months before the date of termination so decided. The Conference of the Parties shall decide, in consultation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, on the distribution of any uncommitted balances after all liquidation expenses have been met.

Contributions

12. The resources of the Conference of the Parties shall comprise:

(a) Contributions made each year by Parties on the basis of an indicative scale adopted by consensus by the Conference of the Parties, and based on such a scale of assessments of the United Nations as may be adopted from time to time by the General Assembly, adjusted so as to ensure that no Party contributes less than 0.01 per cent of the total, that no one contribution exceeds 25 per cent of the total and that no contribution from a least developed country Party exceeds 0.01 per cent of the total;

(b) Other contributions made by Parties in addition to those made pursuant to paragraph (a);

(c) Contributions from States not Parties to the Convention, as well as governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and other sources;

(d) The uncommitted balance of appropriations from previous financial periods attributed to the fund concerned;

(e) Miscellaneous income attributed to the fund concerned.

13. The Conference of the Parties shall, in adopting the indicative scale of contributions referred to in paragraph 12 (a), make adjustments to take account of contributions of Parties which are not members of the United Nations, as well as those of regional economic integration organizations that are Parties.

14. In respect of contributions made pursuant to paragraph 12 (a):

(a) Contributions for each calendar year are expected on or before 1 January of that year;

(b) Each Party shall, as far in advance as possible of the date due for the contribution, inform the head of the Convention Secretariat of the contribution it intends to make and of the projected timing of that contribution.

15. Contributions made pursuant to paragraphs 12 (b) and (c) shall be used in accordance with such terms and conditions, consistent with the objectives of the Convention, as may be agreed between the head of the Convention Secretariat and the contributor. Contributions to the Supplementary Fund referred to in paragraph 9 shall, as appropriate, be placed in sub-accounts.

16. Contributions made pursuant to paragraph 12 (a) from States and regional economic integration organizations that become Parties to the Convention after the beginning of a financial period shall be made pro rata temporis for the balance of that financial period. Consequent adjustments shall be made at the end of each financial period for other Parties.

17. All contributions shall be paid in United States dollars or its equivalent in a convertible currency into a bank account to be designated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in consultation with the head of the Convention Secretariat.

18. The head of the Convention Secretariat shall acknowledge promptly all pledges and contributions and shall inform the Parties, once a year, of the status of pledges and payments of contributions.

19. Contributions not immediately required shall be invested at the discretion of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in consultation with the head of the Convention Secretariat. The resulting income shall be credited to the appropriate fund or funds referred to in paragraphs 7, 9 and 10.

Accounts and audit

20. The accounts and financial management of all funds governed by the present rules shall be subject to the internal and external audit process of the United Nations.

21. During the second year of the financial period the United Nations shall provide the Parties with an interim statement of accounts for the first year of the financial period. The United Nations shall also, as soon as practicable, provide to the Parties a final audited statement of accounts for the full financial period.

Administrative support costs

22. The Conference of the Parties, under such terms as may from time to time be mutually agreed upon between it and the United Nations, shall reimburse the United Nations from the funds referred to in paragraphs 7, 9 and 10, as the case may be for the purposes of services rendered, including the administration of the relevant fund by the United Nations, to the Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies and the Convention Secretariat.

Amendments

23. Any amendment to the present rules shall be adopted by the Conference of the Parties by consensus.

Decision 3/COP.1

Designation of a Convention Secretariat and arrangements for its functioning: administrative and support arrangements

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling that the Conference of the Parties, in accordance with article 23, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, shall, at its first session, designate a Convention Secretariat and make arrangement for its functioning,

Having examined the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on the administrative arrangements involved in the designation of a Convention Secretariat and arrangements for its functioning,

1. Notes with appreciation the advice of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on this matter, as contained in document A/AC.241/44, as amended in paragraph 4 of document A/AC.241/55, as well as the clarifications in document A/AC.241/64 and related comments made in Working Group I of the Committee,

2. Also notes with appreciation the advice of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme on this matter, as contained in document A/AC.241/55/Add.2, as well as the clarifications in document A/AC.241/64 and related comments made in Working Group I of the Committee;

3. Accepts the offer of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, contained in documents A/AC.241/44 and A/AC.241/55, for the United Nations to provide the administrative and support arrangements for the Convention Secretariat, and requests the Secretary-General to provide these administrative and support arrangements for the Convention Secretariat of the Convention, pursuant to article 23 of the Convention;

4. Decides that, in order for the Convention Secretariat to enjoy the administrative and financial autonomy necessary to ensure efficient servicing of the Convention and of its implementation, it should not be fully integrated into the work programme and management structure of any particular department or programme of the United Nations;

5. Decides to review these arrangements not later than at its fourth session, in consultation with the Secretary-General, with a view to making such modifications as may be considered desirable by both parties;

6. Requests the Executive Secretary to pursue the question of the allotment of overhead to defray administrative expenses as indicated in the advice of the Secretary-General and to report the results at its second session;

7. Expresses its appreciation to the departments and programmes of the United Nations, as well as agencies of the United Nations system, that have supported the interim secretariat of the Convention and the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee process in general, expresses the desire that the support and cooperation given by those departments, programmes and agencies should continue, and invites these entities and the Executive Secretary to collaborate in reaching understandings that specify the nature of cooperation and support that each entity would provide to the Convention Secretariat.

Decision 4/COP.1

Interim arrangements for the Conference of the Parties and for the Secretariat of the Convention

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling the General Assembly resolution 51/180 whereby it approved the interim arrangements for the Conference of the Parties to the CCD and the Secretariat of the Convention;

1. Notes with appreciation the offer of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to provide the administrative and support arrangements for the Convention Secretariat as contained in documents A/AC.241/44 and A/AC.241/55;

2. Requests the General Assembly, bearing in mind the institutional linkage of the Convention Secretariat to the United Nations and the large number of States including those who are on the list of LDCs that are Parties to the Convention, to decide to finance from the Regular Programme Budget of the United Nations the Conference servicing costs arising from sessions of the Conference of the Parties and subsidiary bodies for the duration of the institutional linkage approved by the Conference of the Parties decision,

3. Requests further the General Assembly to include the second session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the meetings of its subsidiary bodies in the calendar of conferences and meetings for 1998-1999;

4. Requests also the Secretary-General to appoint, after consultation with the Conference of the Parties through its Bureau, the first head of the Convention Secretariat, with the title of Executive Secretary at the level of Assistant Secretary-General on an exceptional basis for a three-year period starting on 1 January 1999, and decides that at the end of the term of the first head of the Convention Secretariat the post of the head of the Convention Secretariat be classified at the D-2 level, with all other senior posts of the Secretariat from 1 January 1999 having appropriate relationship to the D-2 level;

5. Requests the President of the first Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD to present to the General Assembly the results of its first session held in Rome from 29 September to 10 October 1997;

6. Requests the Executive Secretary to report to its second session on the implementation of this decision.

Decision 8/COP.1

Extrabudgetary funding for 1998

The Conference of the Parties,

Having considered the report of the Executive Secretary on extrabudgetary funding for the Interim Secretariat in 1998 (ICCD/COP(1)/4),

1. Takes note of the estimates of requirements for extrabudgetary funding for 1998 submitted by the Executive Secretary;

2. Notes with appreciation the contributions made thus far to the Trust Fund established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/188, and invites Parties, as well as Governments of States not Parties, regional economic integration organizations and other interested organizations, to continue to make voluntary contributions to that fund during the transition period following the first session of the Conference of the Parties, which should end no later than 31 December 1998;

3. Also notes with appreciation the contributions made thus far to the Special Voluntary Fund established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/188, and also invites Parties, as well as Governments of States not Parties, regional economic integration organizations and other interested organizations, to continue to make voluntary contributions to that fund during the transition period so that developing countries affected by desertification and drought, in particular least developed countries, can participate fully and effectively in the second session of the Conference of the Parties;

4. Requests the head of the Secretariat to report to the second session of the Conference of the Parties on the status of contributions to, and expenditures from, the Trust Fund and the Special Voluntary Fund;

5. Decides that the head of the Interim Secretariat, under the authority of the Secretary-General, may use the Special Voluntary Fund, as appropriate, to assist developing countries affected by desertification and drought, in particular the least developed countries, to participate fully and effectively in the second session of the Conference of the Parties;

6. Decides further that the head of the Interim Secretariat, under the authority of the Secretary-General, may use the Trust Fund, as appropriate, to support also the participation of representatives of non-governmental organizations in the work of the second session of the Conference of the Parties;

7. Requests the General Assembly to take necessary action to arrange for the Secretary-General to authorize the head of the Interim Secretariat to use the Special Voluntary Fund and the Trust Fund in accordance with paragraphs 5 and 6 above;

8 Requests the General Assembly to transfer any amounts remaining in the Trust Fund and the Special Voluntary Fund as of 31 December 1998 respectively to the Supplementary Fund to be established pursuant to paragraph 9 of the financial rules and to the Special Fund to be established in accordance with paragraph 10 of the financial rules

---